

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT PARA 4 LINES 6 THRU 9)

PASS AGRICULTURE ELECTRONICALLY

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: EAGR, EEC  
SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF EC PRICE PACKAGE

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 1516, (B) EC BRUSSELS 1437 (C) 76 EC BRUSSELS  
10450 (D) 76 EC A-261 (E) 75 EC A-457

1. SUMMARY: THE MISSION FEELS THAT THE COMMISSION HAS A  
GOOD CHANCE OF SECURING AGREEMENT ON 1977/78 PRICES --AT A  
LEVEL SOMEWHAT HIGHER THAN NOW PROPOSED--BEFORE ITS APRIL 1  
DEADLINE. STRONGEST OPPOSITION TO THE COMMISSION PRICE  
PACKAGE WILL COME FROM THE BENELUX COUNTRIES,  
DISAPPOINTED BY THE LOW LEVEL OF PRICE INCREASES, PARTICULARLY  
FOR MILK.  
ALTHOUGH THE PACKAGE SHIES AWAY FROM MAJOR POLICTY INNOVATIONS,  
SIGNIFICANT POLICY CHANGES ARE PROPOSED FOR GRAINS, DAIRY PRODUCTS  
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AND ISOGLUCOSE. IN PARTICULAR, WE BELIEVE THE COMMISSION  
PACKAGE PAVES THE WAY FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE  
PROPOSED VEGETABLE OIL TAX. THE ADDITIONAL COST OF THE  
PRICE PACKAGE TO THE EC BUDGET IS ESTIMATED AT ONLY 38 MILLION  
U.A. IN 1977 BUT AN ADDITIONAL BUDGET OF 254 U.A. IS FORESEEN,  
MAINLY FOR MCA'S. END SUMMARY.

2. THE MISSION HAS NOW RECEIVED VOLUME II OF THE COMMISSION'S PRICE PACKAGE PROPOSALS; THIS VOLUME CONTAINS SOME 48 DRAFT REGULATIONS WHICH WOULD IMPLEMENT THE PRICES AND OTHER MEASURES PROPOSED IN REFS. A AND B. COPIES OF VOLUME II AS WELL AS COPIES OF A COMMISSION REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PRICE PACKAGE ARE BEING SENT TO ED CASEY, STATE, AND RICHARD SCHROETER, FAS. NEW MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THE ABOVE DOCUMENTS HAS BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE ANALYSIS OF THE PRICE PACKAGE GIVEN BELOW.

3. THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN CHOSEN WITH THE AIM OF MAXIMIZING THE CHANCES OF A QUICK ADOPTION OF 1977/78 PRICES AND OF MAKING A MODEST START TOWARDS THE SOLUTION OF EC PROBLEMS IN THE DAIRY SECTOR AND IN THE AGRO-MONETARY SECTOR. THEY HAVE COME UP WITH A STREAMLINED PACKAGE EMPHASIZING A PRUDENT PRICE POLICY--A PACKAGE WHICH SEEKS TO AVOID MEMBER STATE CONFRONTATIONS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. THUS, THE COMMISSION HAS SOFTENED THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL ASPECTS OF THE DAIRY PACKAGE. IT HAS SET THE STAGE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF THE VEGETABLE OIL TAX, PUSHED BACK APPLICATION OF THE CORESPONSIBILITY TAX TO SEPTEMBER AND MADE A NUMBER OF CHANGES IN THE PROPOSED NON-MARKETING PREMIUMS FOR MILK WHICH SHOULD MAKE THIS MEASURE MORE ATTRACTIVE TO MEMBER STATES (E.G., PERMITTED ITALY TO EXCLUDE ITSELF FROM THE SCHEME, PROVIDED FOR GREATER FEOGA FUNDING). THEY HAVE LEFT THE PROPOSAL FOR A CHANGE IN THE MCA SYSTEM (REF. C) ON THE TABLE BUT HAVE NOT INCLUDED IT IN THE PRICE PACKAGE. INSTEAD, THEY ARE SEEKING ONLY RELATIVELY SMALL REDUCTIONS IN MCA'S. THEY HAVE PROMISED NEW PROPOSALS FOR BEEF, OLIVE OIL AND STARCH, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BUT HAVE POSTPONED THEIR FORMULATION UNTIL MID-1977.

4. OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH PERMDELS, COMMISSION OFFICIALS AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES INDICATE THAT THE COMMISSION WILL PROBABLY BE SUCCESSFUL IN ACHIEVING AGREEMENT ON THE 1977/78 PRICE PACKAGE BEFORE APRIL 1. SUCH AGREEMENT WILL, NO DOUBT, INVOLVE SOMEWHAT HIGHER PRICES THAN ORIGINALLY PROPOSED BY THE COMMISSION AND SMALLER REDUCTIONS IN MCA'S. THE GREATEST OPPOSITION STEMS FROM DISAPPOINTMENTS AT THE LOW LEVEL OF PROPOSED DAIRY PRICE INCREASES, IT APPEARS THAT THE PACKAGE IS BASICALLY ACCEPTABLE TO THE UK, FRANCE, IRELAND, DENMARK AND ITALY. THE LOW LEVEL OF THE PROPOSED PRICE INCREASES IN THESE COUNTRIES IS OFFSET TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT BY PROPOSED GREEN RATE DEVALUATIONS AND, IN THE CASE OF THE NEW MEMBERS, PRICE INCREASES GENERATED BY THE LAST PHASE OF ALIGNMENT WITH COMMON PRICES. IT APPEARS THAT ONLY THE BENELUX COUNTRIES WILL HAVE MAJOR PROBLEMS WITH THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS, AND, INDEED, A MEMBER OF THE DUTCH PERMDEL HAS TOLD US THAT HE DOES NOT EXPECT AGREEMENT BY

APRIL 1. HE FEELS THAT BENELUX AG MINISTERS WILL HAVE TO MAKE A GREATER SHOW OF RESISTANCE TO THE PACKAGE AND THAT THEY WILL PUSH THE FINAL DECISION INTO APRIL. ALTHOUGH IT IS CONCEDED THAT GERMAN AGRICULTURAL MINISTER ERTL HAS A CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL PROBLEM WITH THE PACKAGE, IT IS FELT THAT THE PACKAGE IS REASONABLY ACCEPTABLE TO THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT AS A WHOLE. WITH A SLIGHTLY LARGER INCREASE IN GERMAN PRICES, THE GERMANS COULD AGREE TO THE PACKAGE.

5. A KEY CONCERN REGARDING THE COMMISSION'S PRICE PACKAGE IS WHETHER EVEN IN ITS PRESENT FORM IT WILL BE ENOUGH TO SIGNIFICANTLY AMELIORATE THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS FACING THE CAP. THERE IS ROOM FOR SERIOUS DOUBT HERE. THERE IS NOTHING IN THE DAIRY PROPOSALS WHICH IS LIKELY TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION IN THAT MARKET--AT LEAST IN THE SHORT TERM. WITH NORMAL WEATHER, DAIRY SURPLUS PROBLEMS ARE LIKELY TO WORSEN THIS YEAR. SIMILARLY, THE PROPOSALS PROVIDE NO SOLUTION TO THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH MCA'S. THEY WOULD RESULT IN SOME BUDGETARY SAVINGS, BUT ONLY ASSUMING THAT THE MONETARY SITUATION DOES NOT DETERIORATE FURTHER. WE SUSPECT GUNDELACH FEELS THAT, AFTER A YEAR OF FLOUNDERING WITH THE MCA AND DAIRY PROBLEMS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE COMMUNITY SHOW SOME POSITIVE, EVEN IF QUITE LIMITED, ACHIEVEMENT IN DEALING WITH CAP PROBLEMS.

6. AS NOTED ABOVE, THE COMMISSION'S PRICE PACKAGE SHIES AWAY FROM MAJOR NEW POLICY INITIATIVES. THE POLICY CHANGES WE DEEM MOST SIGNIFICANT ARE DISCUSSED BELOW.

7. GRAINS. MAJOR CHANGES IN THE EC GRAIN CAP WERE APPROVED LAST YEAR (REF. D). HOWEVER, THESE CHANGES WERE ONLY PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED. THIS YEAR THE COMMISSION PROPOSES TO MOVE FURTHER TOWARDS ITS GOAL OF A SINGLE INTERVENTION PRICE FOR BARLEY, CORN AND SOFT WHEAT (ALTHOUGH CORN WOULD STILL BE 2 U.A./TON BELOW THE INTERVENTION PRICE FOR WHEAT AND BARLEY). MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE COMMISSION WOULD ESTABLISH A REFERENCE PRICE FOR SOFT WHEAT OF MILLING QUALITY. THE COMMISSION WOULD BE AUTHORIZED TO TAKE SPECIAL INTERVENTION MEASURES TO SUPPORT THIS PRICE, BUT MILLING QUALITY SOFT WHEAT WOULD NOT HAVE THE IRON CLAD INTERVENTION GUARANTEE THAT IT ENJOYED IN 1976/77. CONSEQUENTLY, COPA HAS OPPOSED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS REFERENCE PRICE FEATURE. THE COMMISSION'S PRICE PROPOSALS WOULD ALSO INCREASE THE GAP BETWEEN THE TARGET (AND THRESHOLD) PRICE FOR CORN AND THE INTERVENTION PRICE FOR BARLEY SOMEWHAT. THIS SHOULD MAKE SALES OF THESE GRAINS FOR FEED USE MORE COMPETITIVE WITH IMPORTED CORN.

8. PROPOSED INCREASES FOR GRAIN PRICES ARE QUITE SMALL COMPARED WITH THE INCREASES OF RECENT YEARS. HOWEVER, THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS ALSO PROVIDE FOR THE PARTIAL ALIGNMENT OF GRAIN PRICES IN THE NEW MEMBER STATES WITH THOSE OF THE EC AT THE START OF THE NEW MARKETING YEAR AND FULL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALIGNMENT, AS SCHEDULED, BY JANUARY 1, 1978. IN THE CASE OF THE UK, THIS WILL MEAN AN INCREASE IN WHEAT AND BARLEY INTERVENTION PRICES OF MORE THAN 20 PERCENT JUST IN TERMS OF UNITS OF ACCOUNT. THE DEVALUATION OF THE GREEN POUND WILL RESULT IN AN ADDITIONAL INCREASE. IMPORT LEVIES ON GRAINS WILL INCREASE BY A CORRESPONDING AMOUNT.

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USDEL HTN GENEVA

US MISSION GENEVA 7415

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9. ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT CHANGE PROPOSED BY THE COMMISSION CONCERNS THE LIMITATION OF THE PRODUCER SUBSIDY FOR DURUM TO SPECIFIED REGIONS IN SOUTHERN ITALY. CURRENTLY THESE SUBSIDIES ARE PAID TO SEVERAL REGIONS IN FRANCE AND NORTHERN ITALY AS WELL; THE COMMISSION HOPES THAT THIS ACTION WILL DISCOURAGE DURUM PRODUCTION IN THESE AREAS. THE EC HAD HAD SERIOUS DISPOSAL PROBLEMS WITH DURUM WHEAT OVER THE PAST FEW

YEARS.

10. CITRUS: THE EC PROPOSALS FOR A 1-YEAR EXTENSION OF THE MARKETING PREMIUM FOR LEMONS AND THE INTRODUCTION OF A SYSTEM OF PROCESSING SUBSIDIES SHOULD BE OF SOME CONCERN TO THE UNITED STATES. THE MARKETING SUBSIDY FOR LEMONS WAS ORIGINALLY SUPPOSED TO BE A TEMPORARY 1-YEAR MEASURE; 1977/78 WILL MARK ITS THIRD YEAR OF OPERATION. VOLUME I OF THE EC PROPOSALS NOTES THAT THE MARKETING PREMIUM APPEARS TO HAVE AIDED ITALIAN EXPORTS OF LEMONS TO THE REST OF THE COMMUNITY SUBSTANTIALLY, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO CLASS I LEMONS, EXPORTS OF WHICH DOUBLED IN 1975/76, THE FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PREMIUM SYSTEM. THE PROCESSING SUBSIDY SYSTEM FOR LEMONS PROPOSED BY THE COMMISSION WOULD OPERATE IN A MANNER SIMILAR TO THE SYSTEM NOW OPERATIVE FOR ORANGES. PROCESSORS WOULD PAY A MINIMUM PRICE FOR LEMONS (EQUAL TO THE BUYING-IN PRICE FOR CLASS III LEMONS PLUS 10 PERCENT). IN RETURN THEY WOULD RECEIVE SUBSIDIES EQUAL TO "THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MINIMUM PURCHASE PRICE.... AND THE PRICE CHARGED FOR THE RAW MATERIAL IN THIRD COUNTRIES." THIS SUBSIDY WOULD APPLY TO 85 PERCENT OF THE EC PRODUCE BOUGHT BY PROCESSORS (OR MORE IF THE PROCESSOR COULD PROVE THAT MORE THAN 85 PERCENT OF HIS PRODUCTS WERE MARKETED OUTSIDE ITALY).

11. DAIRY. ALTHOUGH THE COMMISSION HAS MAINTAINED THE BUILT OF THE EXISTING "DAIRY PACKAGE," SOME OF THE CHANGES MADE ARE OF CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE TO THE UNITED STATES. THE COMMISSION HAS FORMALLY LEFT THE PROPOSAL FOR A TAX ON VEGETABLE OIL ON THE TABLE. HOWEVER, WE FEEL THAT THE AMBIGUOUS WORDING USED IN PRESENTING THIS PROPOSAL (REF. A) INDICATED THAT THE COMMISSION IS PAVING THE WAY FOR A WITHDRAWAL OF THIS TAX. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE COMMISSION WILL ATTEMPT TO USE WITHDRAWAL OF THE TAX AS A LEVER TO SECURE MORE GENEROUS CONSUMER SUBSIDIES FOR BUTTER. THE COMMISSION PROPOSAL NOW IN THE PACKAGE PROVIDES FOR A RELATIVELY MODEST INCREASE IN EC FUNDING OF THE EXISTING CONSUMER SUBSIDY. WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE COMMISSION WILL PUSH FOR A MORE ATTRACTIVE CONSUMER SUBSIDY PROGRAM.

12. VOLUME II OF THE COMMISSION'S PRICE PACKAGE CONTAINS A DRAFT REGULATION WHICH WOULD PLACE CERTAIN CONDITIONS ON THE INTERVENTION BUYING OF NFDM. SALES TO INTERVENTION AGENCIES COULD BE MADE ONLY BY THE DAIRY ACTUALLY MANUFACTURING THE NFDM AND ONLY IN THE MEMBER STATE WHERE IT IS PRODUCED. THE LATTER CONDITION IS AIMED AT PREVENTING THE MOVEMENT OF NFDM FROM THE OTHER MEMBER STATES TO GERMANY, WHICH IS CURRENTLY PROFITABLE FOR MONETARY REASONS. THE DRAFT REGULATION WOULD ALSO GIVE INTERVENTION AGENCIES THE RIGHT

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TO REFUSE TO BUY NFDM FROM DAIRIES WHICH HAVE NOT CONCLUDED CONTRACTS FOR THE DELIVERY OF LIQUID SKIM MILK TO PIG FARMERS. WHILE THESE CONDITIONS IN THEMSELVES ARE NOT OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE. THEY COULD POSSIBLY BE A FORERUNNER OF MORE STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS ON THE INTERVENTION PURCHASING OF NFDM.

13. THE COMMISSION HAS MODIFIED ITS 1975 PROPOSAL/REF. E) FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RULES CALLING FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF MILK FATS AND PROTEINS IN DAIRY PRODUCTS. THE NEW REGULATION WOULD PROHIBIT "UNDER A DESIGNATION APPEARING IN THE ANNEX"-- WHICH LISTS 14 DAIRY PRODUCTS' "OR UNDER A DESIGNATION OR PRESENTATION REFERRING DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY TO ONE OF THE PRODUCTS DEFINED IN THE ANNEX." THIS WORDING WOULD SEEM TO BE SOMEWHAT MORE LIBERAL THAN THAT OF THE PREVIOUS PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD HAVE FORBIDDEN MARKETING OR USE IN MANUFACTURE OF SPECIFIED DAIRY PRODUCTS CONTAINING NON-MILK FATS OR PROTEINS. HOWEVER, A BROAD INTERPRETATION OF THE TERM "PRESENTATION" COULD CREATE PROBLEMS FOR PRODUCTS CONTAINING SOYBEAN OIL OR PROTEIN. ALSO, THE NEW REGULATION INCLUDES ICE CREAM AS ONE OF THE DESIGNATED DAIRY PRODUCTS. THE NEW REGULATION INCLUDES AN EXEMPTION FOR THE INCLUSION OF NON-MILK PROTEINS OR FATS INTENDED TO CHANGE THE "ORGANOLEPTIC CHARACTERISTICS" OF DAIRY PRODUCTS.

14. ISOGLUCOSE. THE PROPOSALS FOR ISGLUCOSE COULD HINDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF A POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT MARKET FOR U.S. CORN. THESE PROPOSALS WERE DISCUSSED IN DETAIL BY SEPTTEL.

15. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS. FOR THE FIRST TIME A REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE COMMISSION'S PRICE PROPOSALS WAS ISSUED SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE PROPOSALS THEMSELVES. THIS REPORT WAS DONE BY THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR THE BUDGET (XIX). REPORTEDLY, THE COUNCIL OF FINANCE MINISTERS ARE TO DISCUSS THIS REPORT AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS BEGIN THEIR DELIBERATIONS ON THE PRICE PROPOSALS THEMSELVES. THE REPORT CONCLUDES THAT THE NET EFFECT OF THE

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COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS WILL BE TO INCREASE EC BUDGET EXPENDITURES DURING THE REMAINDER OF 1977 BY ABOUT 38 MILLION U.A. (HOWEVER, THE NET COST OVER A 12-MONTHS PERIOD IS ESTIMATED AT 254 MILLION U.A.). NEVERTHELESS, THE REPORT INDICATES THAT AN ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION OF 478 MILLION U.A. WILL BE NEEDED IN 1977, LARGELY AS A RESULT OF THE HIGHER-

THAN-EXPECTED COST OF MCA'S.HINTON

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